DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 158 469 EC 111 843

AUTHOR Swanson, Jennie E.; Kise, Leonard K.
TITLE Parents as Partners in Assessment: The Future Begins Now!
PUB DATE Jun 78
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the World Congress on Future Special Education (First, Stirling, Scotland, June 25 - July 1, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Development; *Developmental Tasks; *Early Childhood Education; *Parent Role; *Student Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS *Parent Resources

ABSTRACT

The paper describes "Partners in Child Development--A Creative Approach to Parenting," a developmental profile of 160 competencies of children (birth to 5 years) which is designed to be used by parents to chart their child's unique developmental pattern. It is explained that each competency is described, with suggestions for new interactions for partnerships between the parent and child, which expand the child's newly formed ability. (Author/SBH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

131
#11

- ED158469

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN ASSESSMENT: THE FUTURE BEGINS NOW!

Submitted for Publication

First World Congress on Future Special Education

©

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C.E.C.

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

EC 111843

ABSTRACT

PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN ASSESSMENT:
THE FUTURE BEGINS NOW!

Current genetic research verifies the uniqueness of each child and gives direction for new perspectives in assessment to optimize each child's unique development.

Partners in Child Development: A Creative Approach to Parenting* describes 160 competencies of children (birth-5 years). The competencies include milestones in development which have been integrated to provide a holistic view of the child's functioning.

The developmental profile is designed to be used by parents to chart their child's unique developmental pattern. Each competency is described with suggestions for new interactions or partnerships between the parent and the child, which expand the child's newly-formed ability.

By:

Jennie E. Swanson, Ed.D.
Child Development Specialist
Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine
Department of Pediatrics
2160 S. First Avenue
Maywood, Illinois 60153

Leonard K. Kise, Ed.D.
Professor
Human Learning and Development
Northern Illinois University
Graham Hall
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

Kise, Leonard K., and Swanson, Jennie E. Partners in Child Development: A Creative Approach to Parenting. Published by Partners in Child Development, Box 350, DeKalb, Il. 60115. 1978

PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN ASSESSMENT: THE FUTURE BEGINS NOW!

Current genetic research verifies the uniqueness of each child. Each child has a different genetic composition. Each one matures at their own rate in their own way. Each child's transactions with their environment is different. Each child is vulnerable to different influences at different times. These conditions pose a problem in the assessment of the functioning of young children, and give direction for new perspectives for the future.

Normative scores in the past have sometimes obscured a child's unique pattern and did not describe the child's present functioning. Therefore, often the present learning time of the child was not optimized. The "tick-tock" of the normative clock was imposed on the child's natural learning rhythms. Critical influences to which the child was presently susceptible were only "guesstimates", which were derived from a contrived testing situation.

A more precise way is needed to identify the achievement of major competencies of young children, as well as a method which is descriptive of a child's present unique patterns, as a basis for optimizing the present moment of the child. Parents are a practical source for moment-to-moment developments of their child.

They are also the major determiners of the CONDITIONS for their child's development both genetic and environmental. Therefore, the parent is an excellent source for the assessment of functioning of their child.

Most parents are able, with guidance, to observe their child on a day-to-day basis in a natural context (the home area) and adapt their transactions and the environment to their child's needs, interests, and abilities as well as their own.

Partners in Child Development: A Creative Approach to Parenting is a publication introduced at the First World Congress on Future Special Education in Scotland. It provides parents with a list of 160 developmental competencies of young children for moment-to-moment assessment, and a system to expand a child's newly formed ability.

In Partners in Child Development, the parent:

1. Records the date and age of an observed competency.
2. Plots the child's development on a profile chart.
3. Reads and adapts suggestions for interactions to their child.
4. Creates new interaction opportunities based on their observations and their child's functioning.

As a parent records their child's competencies on a chart, their child's unique developmental profile emerges. The trend direction of the profile alerts the parent to their child's strengths and areas for improvement. Lack of progress and gaps in areas of development may be identified early due to on-going assessment by the parent. No score or label is derived. The intent of the assessment is to provide parents with a frame of reference for observation as a basis for providing more meaningful and caring interchanges.

The developmental profile may be used by professionals (medical,

nursing, educational, psychological, social, neurological, etc.) or paraprofessionals to assess a child's functioning through direct observation or through a parent interview. The developmental profile may be used as pre- and post-test data and for evaluation of progress of the child, as well as the program. Individualized educational programs, behavioral objectives, and curriculum suggestions may be derived from the suggestions for interactions provided for each competency.

The 160 competencies (which number from 1-160) include some of the major milestones from the areas of intellectual, language, social, emotional, motor and affective development. These areas have been integrated for a holistic approach. This encourages the parent to observe and react to the total functioning of the child. The developmental areas are described in context with the other areas of development. For example, a language competency is described in a social, motor, intellectual and affective context.

The competencies are listed beginning with the primitive reflex actions present in most newborns, and continue through competencies descriptive of many 5 year olds. The competencies are described as major abilities and not as specific skills. Therefore, they are relatively culture-free. Since the rate of competency achievement is individualized, various cultural influences which effect onset may be incorporated. Individual profiles of development may be compared across cultures and for comparison of intervention effects.

The suggestions for interactions are designed to promote positive

affective interchanges between the child, the parent, and the environment. Parents are encouraged to provide interactions based on the child's prior experiences and to introduce novel elements. These suggestions reflect implications derived from brain research, knowledge, and theory, related to increasing neural networks and the activation of neurons.

For children with significant need areas, a procedure is outlined for checking out a non-competency. Suggestions for compensating in some areas are included. Parents with special children are encouraged to be creative and adapt the suggested experiences to their child's special needs.

The parent assessment component of Partners in Child Development has been used in the birth to 5 follow-up clinic at the Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood, Illinois. Most parents were able to record their child's development. The professionals were able to spend more of their time serving as a resource to parents, rather than assessing the child's development. Through natural interactions with the child, the professional may easily validate the parent's recording. If the parent is unable to read or speak English, the interview method is used. Most parents enjoyed bringing the news of their child's latest accomplishments to the professional's attention. As a result of their informed observations, parents were able to verbalize their joys and concerns and communication was enhanced.

The parents appeared to feel more confident in facilitating their child's development when they were an integral part of the professional-parent-child relationship. Parents became less dependent on the

professionals and more resourceful in their interactions with their child.

The parent's competency seems to fuel the child's competency, as has been suggested by Heidi Als, Children's Hospital, Boston, Mass. Because the approach in Partners in Child Development is holistic and based on a competency model, it provides a built-in mainstreaming approach from birth. IF!

- If each child is allowed their own "time" or moment of life.
- If each child has positive affective interchanges.
- If parents care enough to want to understand more.
- If professionals acknowledge and revere the uniqueness of each individual.
- If professionals acknowledge and revere the similarities among individuals.
- If parents are welcomed as partners.
- If meeting community standards becomes a matter of creating more appropriate standards for each child which, in turn, contributes to the community and to the culture.

Then, the future of special education in the years to come is not only optimistic but exciting!

By:

Jennie E. Swanson, Ed.D.
Child Development Specialist
Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine
Department of Pediatrics
2160 S. First Avenue
Maywood, Illinois 60153
Telephone: 312-381-5098
312-531-3377

Leonard K. Kise, Ed.D.
Professor
Human Learning and Development
Northern Illinois University
Graham Hall
DeKalb, Illinois 60115
Telephone: 312-753-1461
312-758-6060

Kise, Leonard K., and Swanson, Jennie E. Partners in Child Development: A Creative Approach to Parenting, Published by Partners, Box 350, DeKalb, Ill. 60115. 1978